



Short Term Memory Experiments

LEARNING & MEMORY

Experiment 1

Explain to the subject that they are going to hear a list of letters, then after 30s of silence must repeat them back.

Read out the following letters

F K P A B R M T

Wait 30s in silence (time this on your phone or watch)

Ask the subject to repeat the letters back to you (order doesn't matter). Write their response below

Experiment 2

Now tell them you are repeating the experiment, but they will have a task to do in the 30 seconds before the test.

Read out the following letters

E J N D S V L H

Ask the participant to start at 1000 and subtract 7, then keep subtracting 7 until 30 seconds is up (e.g. 1000, 993, 986, 979....) It doesn't matter if they make a mistake, or take a long time, but make sure they focus on the task.

After 30s, ask them to repeat the letters to you, and record their response below.

Experiment 3

Tell them there is one final experiment. This time the letters are:

B L A C K C A T

Wait 30s in silence again. Ask them to recall the letters, and record their response.

Discuss the following questions:

- Which experiment was hardest? Why?
- Which was easiest? Why?
- What does this tell us about short term memory?